

VZCZCXRO4376
RR RUEH DU RUEHMR RUEHRN
DE RUEHTO #1250/01 3470638
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
R 120638Z DEC 08
FM AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 9710
INFO RUCNSAD/SOUTHERN AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY
RUEHLI/AMEMBASSY LISBON 1305
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 0311
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 0172
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MAPUTO 001250

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/23/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MZ](#)

SUBJECT: BEIRA MAYOR TO LEAD NEW NATIONAL POLITICAL MOVEMENT

REF: A. MAPUTO 1190

[B](#). MAPUTO 1083

[C](#). MAPUTO 901

Classified By: A/DCM MATT ROTH FOR REASONS 1.5 B AND D

[1](#). (C) SUMMARY: In Beira, Daviz Simango, the independent breakaway candidate (Ref B), has been decisively re-elected as Mayor of Beira (Ref A), the historic stronghold of longtime opposition party RENAMO, making Beira a test case for a new style of independent third-party democracy, breaking away from the previous pattern of Mozambican politics dominated by ruling party FRELIMO and opposition party RENAMO. With RENAMO described as a "carcass," several political luminaries recently outlined a "third way" in which Simango would likely be the leader of a new national movement, and perhaps on the presidential ticket in the 2009 national elections. While it may be too soon to declare RENAMO as a political movement completely dead, it surely appears on the ropes with little possibility for Dhlakama to re-establish himself as a minimally credible opposition leader. END SUMMARY.

THIRD WAY: OPPOSITION PARTY COALITION LIKELY

[2](#). (C) Daviz Simango's historic win in Beira has given him national media attention, and many suggest that he is the new face of opposition politics. On December 5, the Swedish Ambassador hosted political luminaries Lutero Simango (Daviz Simango's brother and a member of parliament), Venancio Mondlane (nephew of Mozambique's first president Eduardo Mondlane), and Dr. Artur Lambo Vilankulos (a dual American-Mozambican citizen who is also an opposition member of parliament). They described the next chapter in Mozambican politics: a "third way," expected to be announced publicly in February. This nascent third party--though supporters preferred to call it a movement--already has the support of a significant number of small non-RENAMO opposition groups, including formerly-RENAMO political heavyweight Raul Domingo. Dr. Vilankulos pointed out that Simango, and this new movement, will appeal to the youth vote that has become tired of traditional FRELIMO/RENAMO politics to date and finds no need for historical ties to the independence movement. The movement's goal in the 2009 national elections will be to prevent FRELIMO from reaching a two-thirds majority in the Parliament. Doing so would be important to prevent total FRELIMO control of the Parliament and a possible FRELIMO initiative to amend the constitution to suit its purposes. Secondary goals will be to abolish the current slate system and promote direct election of legislative representatives, who would reside in the district they represent, and to promote the election of provincial governors, who would also be resident in their province.

DAVIZ BUILDING NATIONAL SUPPORT

13. (C) Over a one-hour one-on-one December 6 breakfast in Beira, Simango told the Charge he plans to solidify his base in Beira and distance himself from RENAMO, which he described as a "spent force." He said that inheriting the leadership of RENAMO now would be assuming "too much baggage" and that Mozambicans were looking for something new, a political movement which did not feel the need to trace its roots to the liberation struggle but that put the people's interests first. Simango described plans underway to expand his base, using political operatives and volunteer university students to develop a national campaign. Simango claimed himself able to manage the political aspects of the new movement, but that what they most needed was logistical support for cars, offices, t-shirts, gasoline, brochures, and advertising necessary to mount a national campaign. "Time is very short so we must start now." His idea is to launch the new movement officially in February before RENAMO hosts its Congress in March. He reiterated that the goal was to prevent FRELIMO from winning two-thirds control of the National Assembly. Several times, however, he said that they would "surprise everyone with our performance next November."

Simango said that after the elections in 2009, he hoped that the remnants of RENAMO would reconcile with his new movement and join it. When asked if he would run for president, he was cagey, saying that it was important that the movement have a face to lead it, but never stated specifically that he would run. (Note: Simango had told the Italian Ambassador

MAPUTO 00001250 002 OF 002

the week before that he would not run for President in 2009 but rather wait until 2014. End Note) Simango is an impressive politician with an impressive strategic focus on how to manage a campaign and a political movement. He is an English-speaker and participated in a 2006 International Visitors and Leaders Program (IVLP) spending on month in the United States.

DAVIZ FETED COUNTRYWIDE, RENAMO ON THE ROPES

14. (C) Media and political commentators alike see the Beira elections as a lone positive for opposition politics in what was a landslide win for the ruling FRELIMO party in the rest of the country, with historical opposition party RENAMO relegated to the dustbin, except perhaps in Nacala, where there will be a municipal run-off election in January. RENAMO's leader, Alfonso Dhlakama, at first showed humility in RENAMO's loss, but later became bitter and appeared confused in a post-election news conference. RENAMO's fall from power is so significant that even Dhlakama's father voted for a FRELIMO candidate on November 19. While until recently Daviz Simango associated himself with RENAMO despite the party's expulsion of him in the lead-up to the elections, since the December 4 announcement of results, senior RENAMO elements have begun to support Simango publicly. The Archbishop of Beira Jaime Concalves, a long time friend of RENAMO, told the Charge in Beira December 6 that Dhlakama has gone into isolation and that no one could get through to him.

The Archbishop asked that the Charge speak with Dhlakama to convince him of the need to hold a RENAMO party Congress, perhaps in March, to transition to new leadership. (Note: The Charge does not plan to be the messenger for this message.)

COMMENT: DAVIZ COULD MAKE RENAMO A DISTANT MEMORY

15. (C) Daviz Simango's victory marks a new chapter in Mozambican politics (Ref A). Where FRELIMO and RENAMO were

once the dominant forces in politics, the Beira vote shows that personality-driven politics is now possible, and likely, with the planned emergence of the "third way" movement. Mayor Simango's strong track record in Beira, combined with a strategic error by RENAMO's Dhlakama in not renominating him as the RENAMO candidate, and a galvanization of opposition party support around Simango as the next leader, suggests a glimmer of hope for multi-party democracy in Mozambique, which, outside of Beira, has become completely dominated by the ruling FRELIMO party. As a result, the November 19 elections appear to have changed the political landscape, both consolidating FRELIMO's power, and firmly established Daviz Simango as the most important and influential opposition voice in Mozambican politics. While it may be too soon to declare RENAMO as a political movement completely dead, it surely appears on the ropes with little possibility for Dhlakama to re-establish himself as a minimally credible opposition leader.

Amani